DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 101 233 CG 009 444

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TITLE Race and Sex Differences in Evaluating Women.
SPONS AGENCY Massachusetts Univ., Amherst.
PUB DATE Aug 74
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (82nd, New Orleans, Louisiana, August 1974)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS College Students; *Evaluation; *Females; Individual Characteristics; Negative Attitudes; *Racial Differences; Research Projects; *Self Esteem; *Sex Differences; Speeches

ABSTRACT

A critical assumption of this study was that self-evaluations are determined largely by evaluations received from others. In two large national samples, although black females and males did not differ in self-evaluations of intelligence, white females rated themselves much lower than did white males. In the current study, white females evaluated other women more favorably than did white male Ss on the factors tapping instrumental characteristics. The authors suggest that the generally derogatory evaluation of women received from the white male Ss, especially with regard to competence and ability characteristics, may indicate an important contributing factor to the relatively low self-esteem of white females that has been reported in many previous studies. It was noted that the black females and males studied, unlike the whites, did not differ in their evaluations of women. The authors warn that the findings should be regarded as tentative, because they were based on responses from a very small college student sample and should be replicated with a larger and more representative sample. (Author/PC)

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RACE AND SEX DIFFERENCES IN EVALUATING WOMEN[1]

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The traditional assumption that blacks have lower self-esteem than whites has persisted despite contradictory findings (Baughman and Dahlstrom, 1968; Baughman, 1971). Expanding a new formulation proposed by McCarthy and Yancey (1971), Heiss and Owens (1972) examined large-scale survey data and concluded that the relationship between the self-evaluations of blacks and whites varied according to the trait considered. They suggested that blacks are not likely to have lower self-esteem for traits that pertain to intimate interactions and primary group activities that are irrelevant to the concerns of the larger society. On the other hand, they held that traits important in the areas of school and work are "instrumental" and subject to frequent evaluation by whites and are less subject to the development of subcultural norms.

Our purpose was to apply Heiss and Owens' formulation to blacks' and whites' evaluations of "most women", using the semantic differential technique. We assume that theories and research bearing upon self-evaluations of blacks and whites are relevant to research on evaluations of others. Rainwater (1966), for example, suggests that low self-esteem among blacks is primarily derived from the negative evaluations received by individual blacks from parents and peers.

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[1]This study was supported by a Faculty Research Grant from the Graduate Research Council of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Paper presented at the 82nd Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Division 35, New Orleans, Louisiana, August 30-September 3, 1974.

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We maintain that Heiss and Owens' predictions apply to evaluations of men, but that we must introduce conceptual changes to generate predictions applicable to evaluations of "most women". The most salient social role of adult males in our culture is the provider role, but the most salient social roles for "most women" are those of mother and wife, even for women employed outside the home. Thus, traits relevant to the world of work in evaluations of men are more likely to relate to intimate interaction and primary group activities in evaluations of women. We predicted, therefore, that blacks and whites in our sample would not differ in evaluations of "most women" on the traits rated for this study.

Within-race sex differences in evaluating "most women" are also of considerable interest. Research with whites indicates that although stereotypic "feminine" traits are more often negatively valued than "masculine" traits, there is evidence that both sexes positively value feminine traits reflecting warmth and expressiveness, but that white males do not approve of even highly desirable "masculine" traits in women (Broverman et al., 1972). Black males appear more comfortable with instrumental behavior such as outside employment on the part of wives (Scanzoni, 1971); indeed, an occupationally successful wife may be regarded as attractive and an economic asset rather than as a threat (Weston and Mednick, 1970). These considerations led us to predict that in evaluations of "most women", black females and black males would not differ, but that white males would be significantly more negative than white females on those traits which do not reflect the positively valued feminine traits of warmth and expressiveness. White males

in our sample should be most negative toward characteristics in women that are most similar to instrumental (i.e., "masculine") traits.

METHOD

Subjects

The sample consisted of randomly selected state university freshmen---28 black females, 31 black males, 45 white females, and 37 white males. Because at the time of the study most black students entering this university were participants in a special admissions program for promising low-income minority students, only 12 (20%) of the 59 blacks were of middle or upper-middle class status, as measured by father's occupation and education. Lower-status whites were over-sampled to obtain an N comparable to that of lower-status blacks, resulting in a white sample of 20 (24%) middle and upper-middle class students.

Procedures

The race and sex of interviewers were matched to the race and sex of respondents.

Information gathered during lengthy individual interviews included a self-administered 15-item semantic differential scale for the concept "Most women are...". Each of the 15 items was scored on a positive-negative 6-point scale.

Our assumption is that when black Ss rated "most women", most had black women in mind, and that white Ss referred to other whites. In their large sample survey, Crain and Weisman (1972) reported that when an item referred to "most people", associations

with other items indicated that when race was not specified, most black respondents assumed other people to mean other blacks.

The 15 items for all Ss were submitted to a principal component factor analysis with orthogonal varimax rotations. Five independent social evaluation factors emerged. The primary loadings on each factor are shown in Table 1.

Of these factors, the first, third and fifth seem to capture the supportive and expressive characteristics of women that are relevant to intimate interaction. It is noteworthy that a trustworthy, reliable woman is also a good and giving one; the image that comes to mind is that of the nurturant, self-sacrificing mother. As expected, the items in this first factor do not seem to relate to employment-role characteristics. Emotional warmth is apparently so salient in evaluations of women that Warm-Cold forms a unitary factor. Even high activity, which in rating "most men" (not reported in this paper) is related to competence, is related to emotionality when applied to women. The second factor seems to denote instrumental characteristics, while the fourth factor may denote instrumental characteristics of women but are relevant, perhaps, more to the efficient running of a home than to non-primary group activities.

With these empirical factors available it was possible to make more specific hypotheses. On Factors II and IV (i.e., "instrumental" factors) we predicted (1) no main effects for race, sex, or SES (SES is here regarded as a control variable), and (2) a significant race-sex interaction, in which white males would evaluate women more negatively than would white females, whereas black

males would not differ from black females. On Factors I, III, and V (i.e., "expressive" factors) we predicted no main or interaction effects for race, sex, or SES.

RESULTS

Effects of race, sex and SES were analyzed for each factor score. All 2X2X2 ANOVAS are summarized in Table 2. No significant main or interaction effects involving SES appeared.

With the exception of a sex effect ($F=5.09$, $p < .03$) for Factor IV, "Effective, Efficient Female", no significant main or interaction effects for race or sex appeared for any of the 5 factors for "most women". Tests of significance between mean scores of the race-sex groups, shown in Table 3, indicate that the significant sex effect is mainly a function of the especially negative evaluations given by white male Ss, who differed significantly from the white females ($t=2.52$, $p < .02$) and from the black females ($t=2.24$, $p < .03$). The scores of black females, black males, and white females on "Effective, Efficient Female" did not differ significantly from each other.

Tests of mean differences between scores on each "most women" factor for females and males within each race show, as hypothesized, no differences between black females and black males. As predicted, white males evaluated women in significantly more negative terms than did white females on the factors tapping the more instrumental characteristics of women, "Physically and Mentally Robust Female" ($t=2.27$, $p < .03$) and "Effective, Efficient Female" ($t=2.52$, $p < .02$). No differences between white females and males appeared in rating the more expressive and nurturant characteristics of women.

With the exception of the unanticipated significant sex difference in ratings of "Effective, Efficient Female", all the findings for evaluations of "most women" are consistent with the basic postulates of this study.

CONCLUSIONS

Our conclusions must be regarded as tentative, based as they are on responses of a very small sample. The views of students, further, may differ from those of non-students.

A critical assumption of the present study was that self-evaluations are importantly determined by evaluations received from others. In the large national samples studied by Heiss and Owens (1972), and Crain and Weisman (1972), although black females and males did not differ in self-evaluations of intelligence, white females rated themselves much lower than did white males. Crain and Weisman found that compared to white males, white females rated themselves less favorably on a number of ability and character traits than was true for black females as compared to black males. In the present sample, white females evaluated other women more favorably than did white male Ss on the factors tapping instrumental characteristics. It may be true, however, that evaluations received from males are especially salient for the self-esteem of white females. We suggest that the generally derogatory evaluation of women received from the white male Ss, especially with regard to competence and ability characteristics, may indicate an important contributing factor to the relatively low self-esteem of white females that has been reported in so many studies. It is important to note that the black females and males studied, unlike the whites, did not differ

in evaluations of women. These suggestive findings require replication with a larger and more representative sample.

In conclusion, the findings of this exploratory study cast doubt on the widely accepted postulate that blacks are likely to make more derogatory evaluations of other blacks than whites are of other whites. Women were not more negatively evaluated by the black college student Ss in the present study than by white Ss. Indeed, with regard to the instrumental characteristics of women, white males seem to have been most negative of all.

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TABLE 1

"Most Women" Factors

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Factor	Primary Loadings		Salient Characteristics	% Variance
I. Supportive, Giving Female	Trustworthy-Untrustworthy	.78	High scores view women as more trustworthy, reliable, good, responsible, and giving	52.8
	Reliable-Unreliable	.64		
	Good-Bad	.63		
	Responsible-Irresponsible	.46		
	Giving-Taking	.44		
II. Physically and Mentally Robust Female	Healthy-Sick	.57	High scores view women as more healthy, smart and strong	16.0
	Smart-Dumb	.54		
	Strong-Weak	.46		
III. Warm Female	Warm-Cold	.81	High scores view women as warmer	11.4
IV. Effective, Efficient Female	Quick-Slow	.65	High scores view women as more quick, useful, responsible, strong, and good	10.6
	Useful-Useless	.54		
	Responsible-Irresponsible	.45		
	Strong-Weak	.44		
	Good-Bad	.35		
V. Active, Expressive Female	Active-Passive	.70	High scores view women as more active, changing, excited, and happy	10.1
	Changing-Unchanging	.41		
	Calm-Excited	-.30		
	Happy-Sad	.23		

TABLE 2

F Ratios for All Main Effects and Interaction Effects Resulting From Analyses of Variance of the Five Factor Scores

Factor	Race	Sex	SES	Race X Sex	Race X SES	Sex X SES	Race X Sex X SES
"Most Women"							
I	1.39	.60	.49	.24	.30	.01	.77
II	.46	1.36	2.70	2.11	3.16	3.30	1.70
III	.04	.45	.00	2.84	.12	.03	.36
IV	1.39	5.09*	.32	1.21	.87	.10	.85
V	.08	.45	.93	.34	2.21	.03	.13

*$p < .05$

TABLE 3

Mean Scores on 5 Social Evaluation Factors for 4 Race-Sex Groups

Factor	Blacks		Whites	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
"Most Women"				
I: Supportive, Giving Female	-.10	-.14	.15	-.04
II: Physically/Mentally Robust Female	-.14	-.05	.16	-.18
III: Warm Female	-.28	.15	.04	-.09
IV: Effective, Efficient Female	.14	.00	.11	-.36
V: Active, Expressive Female	.12	-.08	-.01	-.03